

SITE FOR MEMORIAL CONTINENTAL HALL.

JANUARY 16, 1897.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union and ordered to be printed.

Mr. MORSE, from the Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds, submitted the following

REPORT.

[To accompany H. R. 10023.]

The Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 9491) entitled "A bill to create a commission to select a suitable reservation or plat of ground in the city of Washington, in the District of Columbia, for memorial purposes, under the auspices of the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution," have carefully considered the same and respectfully report as a substitute therefor the accompanying bill.

The National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution was originally founded in the city of Washington on October 11, 1890, and the next year was incorporated in the District of Columbia under the general law. A national charter was subsequently granted to the society by special act of Congress, approved February 20, 1896. By the terms of that law it is declared that the corporation is created—

for patriotic, historical, and educational purposes, to perpetuate the memory and spirit of the men and women who achieved American independence, by the acquisition and protection of historical spots, and the erection of monuments; by the encouragement of historical research in relation to the Revolution, and the publication of its results; by the preservation of documents and relics, and of the records of the individual services of Revolutionary soldiers and patriots, and by the promotion of celebrations of all patriotic anniversaries; to carry out the injunction of Washington in his farewell address to the American people "to promote, as an object of primary importance, institutions for the general diffusion of knowledge," thus developing an enlightened public opinion and affording to young and old such advantages as shall develop in them the largest capacity for performing the duties of American citizens, to cherish, maintain, and extend the institutions of American freedom; to foster true patriotism and love of country, and to aid in securing to mankind the blessings of liberty.

The headquarters of the society are fixed in the District of Columbia by this law, and it is required "to report annually to the secretary of the Smithsonian Institution concerning its proceedings, and said secretary shall communicate to Congress such portion thereof as he may deem of national interest and importance."

The ladies forming this national society are all direct descendants of the men who founded the nation and achieved its independence. They number upward of 16,000 members, organized into over 300 subordinate chapters, and extending into every State in the Union and every Territory except Alaska. They have a complete and efficient business organization on a permanent basis.

In carrying out the purposes of their organization they have determined to erect in the city of Washington a memorial continental hall "in honor of the statesmen, soldiers, and patriots, men and women, of the American Revolution, and for the preservation of relics of war, peace, domestic life, and industry associated with the period of the conflict for American independence," and have set systematically about raising a building fund for this purpose. The idea of such memorial hall or home was first suggested by the late Mrs. Caroline Scott Harrison, wife of President Harrison, and the first president-general of the society, and has been approved by successive national congresses of the society, and a special building committee has been appointed to carry into execution the project.

They purpose, as they declare, to make this building "a veritable Temple of Fame, not alone in honor of the wonderful men and women who established our great nation, but also of the enterprise, capacity, and public spirit of their female descendants who shall erect it." They intend to make it in architectural design illustrative of the period it commemorates, and sufficiently beautiful and imposing to constitute an ornament to the national capital, worthy alike of the memory of the heroes it honors, of their daughters who rear it, and of the great nation whose birth it will help to commemorate.

For this purpose they ask no appropriation and will not seek in anyway any pecuniary aid from the Government. They simply ask for sufficient land on which to place this memorial continental hall.

This your committee thinks should be unhesitatingly granted, and, by the bill reported, have set apart for such purpose 200 feet square from the northeast corner of the Monument Lot, where the towering monument to the Father of his Country will at times cast its protecting shadow over the memorial proposed to be erected to the followers of the great leader, and where both together, in beautiful unison, will serve to keep green the memory of the Fathers of the Republic. The city is full of memorials to the men who saved the nation, but it has few to the men who made it.

The commendable effort of the ladies of the land to in part supply this lack ought to receive the cordial approval of Congress, and your committee therefore report the accompanying bill as a substitute for the one committed, and recommend its speedy passage.

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